



ELECTION NEWS

A special informational bulletin on the implementation of Michigan's new "consolidated elections" legislation

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Notifying Voters of Polling Place Changes

Michigan election law stipulates that voters must be notified of polling place changes. (MCL 168.660) Updated Voter Identification Cards are generally issued to satisfy the voter notification requirement.

The costs associated with the notification of voters affected by a polling place change must be paid by the local school district if the notification is necessary for any of the reasons listed below. If the voters who must be notified reside in a community college district and/or an intermediate school district that elects its board positions at popular elections (as opposed to meetings), the notification costs must be shared by the community college district and intermediate school district.

- Prior to "consolidated elections," voters attended separate polling places for school district elections and state, federal and municipal elections. Election commission eliminates separate polling places for school district elections.
- Prior to "consolidated elections," voters attended separate polling places for school district elections and state, federal and municipal elections. Election commission maintains the separate polling places – but changes the locations of the polling places used for school district elections.
- Prior to "consolidated elections," voters attended the same polling places for school district elections and state, federal and municipal elections. Election commission establishes separate polling places for school district elections.

It merits note that in an instance where 1) separate polling places are maintained for school district elections and state, federal and municipal elections and 2) updated Voter Identification Cards must be issued to notify voters that both of their polling place locations have changed, the school district(s) would not be responsible for any costs associated with the mailing.

Placement of Offices on Nonpartisan Ballots

In any instance where the nonpartisan portion of a ballot must list a combination of local school district offices, community college district offices, intermediate school district offices and/or district library board offices, the following office order must be observed when the ballots are printed:

Local School Board
Community College Board
Intermediate School Board
District Library Board

Ballot Titles for May 3 Election

With the implementation of Michigan's new "consolidated elections" legislation, there will be an increased number of instances where multiple governmental units must share the same ballot. In response to a number of inquiries we have received regarding the appropriate way to title such ballots for the May 3 election, the recommendations shown below are offered. As reflected in the recommendations, the governmental units sharing the ballot are listed in the ballot title in the order in which they appear on the ballot.

Local school district positions and community college positions:

**OFFICIAL BALLOT
TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2005
LANSING TOWNSHIP, PRECINCT 1

LANSING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
LANSING COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

City positions, local school district positions and community college positions:

**OFFICIAL BALLOT
TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2005
LANSING WARD 1, PRECINCT 5

CITY OF LANSING
LANSING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
LANSING COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Local school district positions; community college positions; and township proposal:

**OFFICIAL BALLOT
TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2005
LANSING TOWNSHIP, PRECINCT 1**

**LANSING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
LANSING COMMUNITY COLLEGE
LANSING TOWNSHIP**

Local school district positions and community college positions; ballot prepared for a consolidated precinct:

**OFFICIAL BALLOT
TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2005
LANSING TOWNSHIP, PRECINCTS 3 & 4**

**LANSING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
LANSING COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Local school district positions and community college positions; ballot prepared for a precinct that serves voters who reside in multiple jurisdictions:

**OFFICIAL BALLOT
TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2005
PRECINCT 1**

**LANSING SCHOOL DISTRICT
LANSING COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

“Close of Registration” for May 3 Election: Reminders

“Close of registration” standards: An unregistered elector who wishes to participate in the May 3, 2005 election must register to vote no later than Monday, April 4, 2005. Michigan election law specifies that a voter registration applicant who meets any of the following standards has fulfilled the “close of registration” requirement for the May 3 election:

- The elector submits a voter registration application through a Secretary of State branch office, a designated voter registration agency or his or her county, city or township clerk’s office on or before April 4.
- The elector submits a voter registration application through the mail – and it is postmarked on or before April 4. If the postmark date is missing or unclear, the voter registration application meets the April 4 registration deadline if 1) the clerk of the applicant’s city or township of residence receives the application on or before April 11 (7th calendar day after April 4) and 2) the application was dated by the applicant on or before April 4.

Office hours: The city or township clerk or other authorized personnel appointed by the clerk must be available in the clerk's office to take voter registrations on April 4.

Notice requirement: A "close of registration" notice must be published twice in separate editions of a newspaper of general circulation in the jurisdictions where the May 3 election will be conducted. The first publication of the notice must appear no later than March 25; the second publication must appear prior to the April 4 deadline for registering to vote for the election. If a proposal will be presented on the May 3 election ballot, the ballot wording of the proposal must be included in the "close of registration" notice. (MCL 168.498)

County treasurer's statement not required in "close of registration" notice: MCL 211.203(3) provides that the "notice of an election in which an increase in the total tax rate limitation is to be voted upon shall contain a statement by the county treasurer of the county or counties in which the local unit voting on the increase is located of the total of all voted increases in the total tax rate limitation, in any local units, affecting the taxable property in the local unit voting on the increase, and the years the increases are effective." While the county treasurer's statement must be placed in the "notice of election" published for an election when required, it does not have to be placed in the "close of registration" notice published for the election.

Notice title: In response to a number of inquiries we have received regarding the appropriate way to title "close of registration" notices for the May 3 election, the following recommendations is offered:

**NOTICE OF LAST DAY OF REGISTRATION
FOR THE ELECTION TO BE HELD ON
MAY 3, 2005 FOR
CITY OF LANSING
LANSING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
LANSING COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Poll List Access on Election Day

On May 3, interest groups may want access to the poll book to determine who has voted. While an interest group has no automatic right to this information on election day, the election official in charge is free to honor the request by 1) periodically making a photocopy of the poll book pages and posting them for review or 2) providing photocopies of the poll book pages to those seeking the information. If either method is used, the poll book must be copied in the precinct; there is no authority to remove the poll book from the precinct during election day.

An alternative to photocopying the poll book is to create a carbon copy which can then be made available to all interested persons. Election officials have also responded to requests for election day voter information by using a carbonized Application to Vote. If this method is used, the Application to Vote carbons cannot be removed from the polling place; displaying the carbons on a table which is equally accessible to all interested persons is the best approach. If carbonized Application to Vote forms are used, they must be purchased by the election official in charge of the election; such forms cannot be purchased by outside interests.

Regardless of what approach is adopted to satisfy such informational requests, it is essential that no individual or group receives earlier or greater access to election day voter information as equal treatment of competing interests is critical to the integrity of the elections process.